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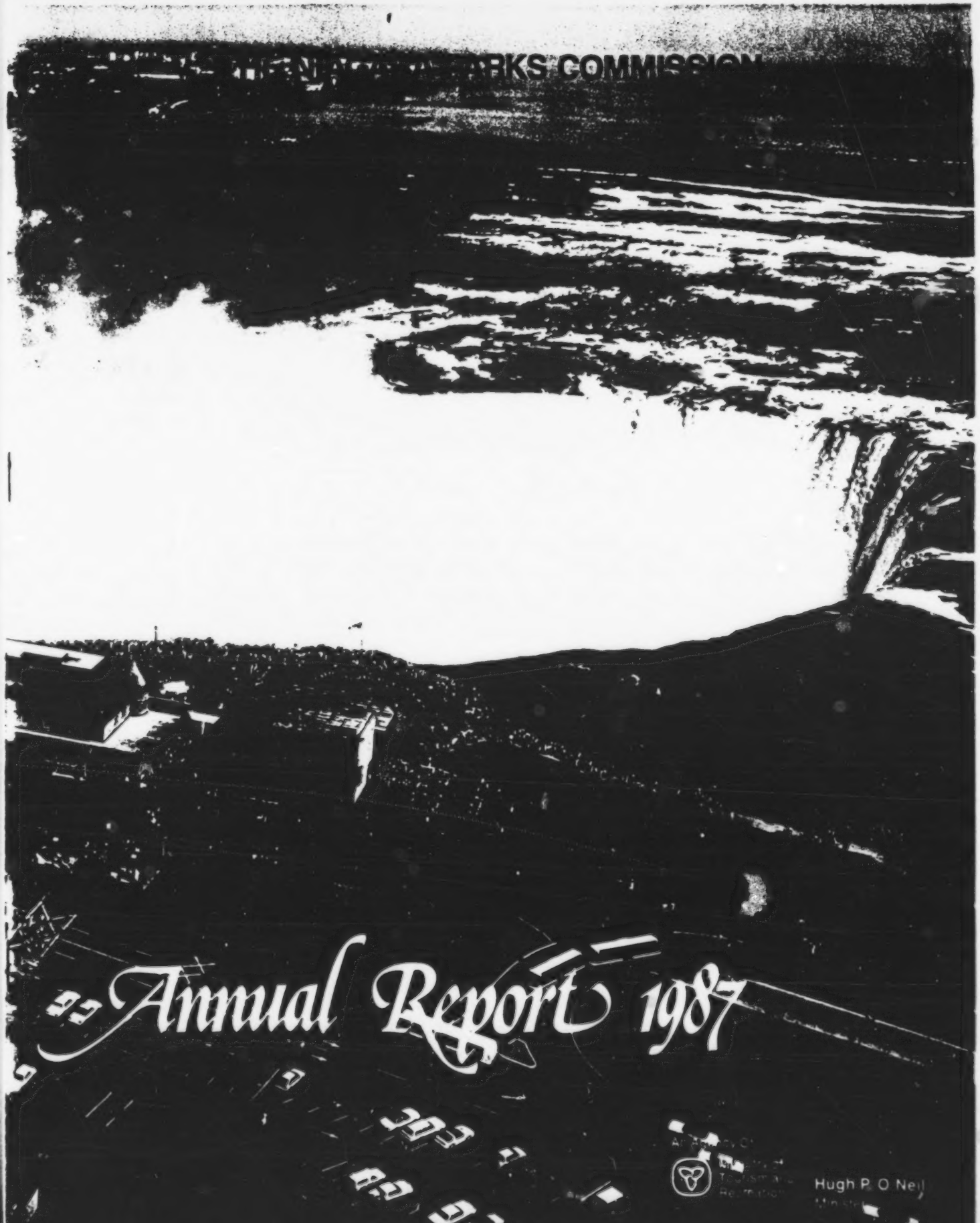
ARKS COMMISSION
Annual Report 1987
Hugh P. O Neil

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

Ontario

The Niagara Parks Commission

In March of 1885, the Ontario Government introduced the "Niagara Falls Park Act—an act for the preservation of the natural scenery about Niagara Falls". This act resulted in the formation of The Niagara Parks Commission.

Originally The Niagara Parks Commission consisted of the area immediately surrounding the Falls on the Canadian side, 62.2 hectares (154 acres). A highlight this year was the acquisition of 39.6 hectares (98.07 acres) along the Niagara escarpment at Queenston Heights Park. This land was transferred to The Niagara Parks Commission for custodial purposes by the Ontario Heritage Foundation. The Park now encompasses 1,254 hectares (3,099 acres). Within Ontario's Niagara Parks are internationally famed gardens, floral displays, ancient fortifications, old battlefields and other historic sites of interest. Many of these attractions continue to be free for use by the local population as well as the over 12 million visitors annually. To maintain the self funding nature, the Commission operates modern attractions, golf courses, a marina, restaurants, gift shops, campgrounds and a major transportation system.

The Commission is proud to preserve and conserve the area bordering the Niagara River from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. It recognizes the delicate balance between preserving the natural landscape and the development of revenue-producing facilities. Above all, the Commission seeks to insure a suitable first and/or last impression for the visitors to Ontario and Canada, crossing the borders at Niagara.

Openness and co-operation are the key commitments to the second century of The Niagara Parks Commission.

The following pages detail the events of our 102nd year of operation.

Members of The Niagara Parks Commission: from left to right – Jim Marino, Niagara-on-the-Lake; M. Margaret George, Fort Erie; Heinz K. Hummel, Fort Erie; Carolyn M. Reid, Thorold; Douglas A. Mann, Niagara Falls; Pamela V. Wallin, St. David's, Chairman; Dennis Schafer, Secretary and General Manager; Marvin Kritzuck (Commission Solicitor); William S. Smeaton, Niagara Falls; Archie Katzman, St. Catharines, Vice Chairman. (Missing from photo – Brian N. Sinclair, Niagara Falls, Harry J. Daniel, St. Catharines and John Holer, Niagara Falls.)

To his Honour
Lincoln M. Alexander, P.C., Q.C., K St J., B.A.
Lieutenant-Governor
of the Province of Ontario

May it please your Honour

The undersigned respectfully presents the
Annual Report of The Niagara Parks Commission
for the fiscal year beginning
November 1, 1986 and ending October 31, 1987.

Hugh P. O'Neil
Minister of Tourism and Recreation

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

Ontario

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Erratum – photo caption on page 12 should read, "Donald R. Wilson, General Manager of The Niagara Parks Commission, from December 1, 1968 to April 30, 1987."

Chairman's Message:

This Annual Report reflects my first full year as Chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission, having been appointed in May, 1986. It proved to be a year when early initiatives were fulfilled, and when plans for present and future ones have added momentum and excitement for the Commission. The enthusiastic support of The Niagara Parks Commission staff for these new initiatives has made the last twelve months most gratifying.

April, 1987 marked the retirement of Don Wilson as General Manager after eighteen and one-half years. His steady hand in guiding the day to day operation of the Commission over that period of time has earned him respect and friendships that will undoubtedly endure. We were fortunate to have Dennis Schafer join us as the new General Manager, following Don Wilson's retirement. Mr. Schafer was selected by a Committee consisting of myself, Commissioners and representatives of the Ontario government. Notices were placed in several publications which resulted in over 225 applications for this position.

We are beginning the second century of Niagara Parks Commission development. As we face that challenge, a conscientious effort is being made to invite opinions and input from all sectors. To focus that input, after inviting proposals from across Canada, the Commission retained the Toronto architectural firm of Moriyama & Teshima to produce a new long range planning document for our consideration.

The firm is guided by a Steering Committee, composed of Commission members and senior staff, the Deputy Minister of Tourism and Recreation, and senior staff of Ontario Hydro. This study team has been crisscrossing the lands of the Commission since the Spring of 1987. They have been aided by a working Advisory Committee composed of representatives of appropriate provincial government ministries, area municipalities, Ontario Hydro, the Niagara Falls Canada Visitor and Convention Bureau, and senior Niagara Parks staff.

We've hosted public meetings, invited individuals and groups to participate, and have held a briefing/brainstorming session with councils from all the area municipalities. Although the long range plan will not be published until approximately June 1988, we have heard many positive comments about the openness of the process in developing our plan for the future. We look forward to continuing this dialogue after the planning study has been received.

I am particularly pleased to report that progress on our new Niagara River Recreation Trail continues on schedule. Already more than half complete, this new 56 kilometre trail, parallel to the Niagara River, is enthusiastically enjoyed by adults and children in wheelchairs, or jogging, walking, or bicycling. We are preparing for installation, of the interpretive plaques which will mark various points of historic interest along the route. In addition to local residents using this trail, we are discovering that many visitors from outside the area are extending their length of stay here in Niagara, or planning a return trip to allow a leisurely hike along the trail. The goodwill and community commitment generated by this project is evidenced by volumes of positive correspondence from local public and private sectors and many of Niagara's visitors.

As this Annual Report reveals, we've enjoyed a positive year financially. I would point out, however, several major projects planned were not begun this year in order to allow the long range planner to assess these projects as part of the overall strategic development of the Commission. We felt this dedication was both responsive and responsible.

Needless to say, we are anxiously awaiting the receipt and consideration of our long range planning document, so that we can, in 1988, chart the course for the second hundred years of development of The Niagara Parks Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

The Niagara Parks Commission

Pamela Verrill Walker
Chairman

Pamela Verrill Walker, B.A., LL.B., Chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission

1987 Appointments

Appointed for one year terms on December 1, 1986 –
Heinz K. Hummel (Fort Erie)
Douglas A. Mann (Regional Niagara)
Jim Marino (Niagara-on-the-Lake)
William S. Smeaton (Niagara Falls)

Archie Katzman was re-appointed Vice Chairman from October 24, 1987 to October 23, 1990.

Terms expired –
Harry J. Daniel, Q.C.
Aug. 2/84 – Aug. 8/87
Brian N. Sinclair
Sept. 8/84 – Sept. 7/87

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

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General Manager's Message

When I began employment with the Commission on May 1st, 1987, I remarked to the Commissioners that I was in a no-win situation. If we experienced a successful year, it would be because my predecessor, Don Wilson, had carefully laid the groundwork. Conversely, if the year was less than satisfactory, it would mean that the new General Manager could not get it together. By any standard, my predecessor laid superb groundwork.

Financially, the Commission experienced its largest profit ever. Without meaning to detract from the efforts of the large number of employees who contributed to this accomplishment, it must be pointed out that many necessary capital improvements were consciously postponed pending the completion of our long range master plan. Accordingly, our profit and, more particularly, our cash balance level can be misinterpreted. As our master plan will indicate, such funds will be essential in upgrading our facilities and adding new services and attractions as we strive to meet the needs of our future visitors.

This report deals with physical improvements, operating changes and financial analyses. It does not, however, consider the true bottom line—customer satisfaction. Few organizations receive the amount of face to face praise and written compliments from visitors as The Niagara Parks Commission. The clean, natural splendour; the gardens; the shops and restaurants; the lighting displays; historic sites; the transit system; golf courses; attractions... all are responsible for guests taking the time to encourage us to "keep up the good work".

Such encouragement, combined with a statutory requirement to remain financially self-sufficient, are strong motivators. Staff take pride in their work, anxiously look forward to hosting and impressing millions of guests, share common goals, understand the business nature of the operation and repeatedly "go the extra mile" for the visitor and the Commission.

It has been my privilege to serve the Commission and its visitors for the last half of the 1986/87 fiscal year. For me, it has been a crash learning experience and I am grateful for the guidance of the Chairman and the Commissioners and the every day support of staff at all levels. Together, it is my hope that we can maintain and build on the earned international reputation of The Niagara Parks Commission in the challenging years ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

The Niagara Parks Commission

D.W. Schafer
General Manager

Dennis William Schafer, General Manager, The Niagara Parks Commission

Weather

"Good" weather is an essential ingredient in the recreation business. The level of outdoor activity fluctuates to a great extent with the weather, and 1987 was a phenomenal year! Summer temperatures were the warmest in 32 years and were matched by a mild winter with good snow conditions.

These ideal conditions meant more people were able to make use of the many free outdoor facilities provided within the Park System. In the summer months, our recreation trail was very popular, picnic tables along the scenic Niagara Parkway were well used, our swimming facilities delighted thousands and our outdoor gardens were enjoyed by millions.

In the winter months, free cross country skiing was available at the Whirlpool Golf Course, and the Winter Festival of Lights display delighted a record number of visitors.

Spring view of Canadian Horseshoe Falls

Attendance – Attractions, Golf Courses and Museums

November 1, 1986 – October 31, 1987

Attractions	Number of Visitors 1987	1986	Increase or (Decrease)
McFarland House	1,632	1,479	153
Whirlpool Golf Course	38,505	40,229	(1,724)
Aerocar	179,048	187,747	(8,099)
Maid of the Mist Incline Railway	997,652	853,113	144,539
Scenic Tunnel	805,670	773,409	32,261
Falls Incline Railway	1,025,948	1,033,445	(7,497)
Greenhouse - Queen Victoria Park	392,549	391,976	573
Oak Hall Par 3 Golf Course	12,883	12,985	(102)
People Movers	462,970	466,793	(3,823)
Miller's Creek Campsite	7,995	7,519	476
Old Fort Erie	40,150	39,552	598
Old Fort Erie Educational Tours	2,458	1,350	1,108
Charles Daley Park	22,478	18,908	3,570
Stoney Creek Battlefield House	10,370	12,025	(1,655)
	4,000,908	3,840,530	160,378
Vehicles Accommodated in Tolled Parking Lots			
Falls Parking Lot	348,194	327,182	21,012
Oakes Garden Parking Lot	23,571	29,152	(5,581)
Rainbow Bridge Parking Lot	40,909	43,660	(2,751)
Greenhouse Parking Lot	30,991	16,950	14,041
Rapids View Parking Lot	103,258	96,561	6,697
	546,923	513,505	33,418

Traffic Figures

Queen Victoria Park 5-Year Vehicle Count

1987	3,591,268
1986	3,684,566
1985	3,787,058
1984	3,826,300
1983	3,241,029

Queen Victoria Park Monthly Traffic Counts

	1987	1986
April	329,135	287,154
May	447,645	443,685
June	511,456	540,346
July	765,808	798,592
August	751,084	801,187
September	450,676	442,412
October	337,464	371,190
	3,591,268	3,684,566

Chartered Bus Permits Issued

1987	9,521
1986	8,872
1985	7,007
1984	6,717
1983	6,825

Total Traffic Recorded in the Niagara Parks System April 1 to October 31

1987	5,248,313
1986	5,295,925
1985	5,588,073
1984	5,405,785
1983	4,864,415

Vehicles Counted in Other Section of The Niagara Parks Commission

Year	North Parkway	South Parkway	Stoney Creek
1987	1,060,454	554,254	42,337
1986	1,016,873	555,077	37,409
1985	984,976	571,140	44,919
1984	975,915	560,350	43,220
1983	982,554	997,107	43,725

(There are not traffic counters at Charles Daley Park or Miller's Creek Park)

There are 7 traffic counters situated on Parks Commission roadways. These counters record the number of vehicles for a 7-month period from April 1st to the end of October.

Four of the counters are situated at the entrances to Queen Victoria Park. They are "one way" counts and are totalled each day giving the number of vehicles entering this area. To arrive at the approximate number of visitors to Queen Victoria Park, we multiply the count by 3.4. Studies show 3.4 is the average number of people per vehicle.

We have one counter on each of the North and South Parkways counting "two way" traffic. An additional counter is located at the entrance to Battlefield Park in Stoney Creek.

Comparative Traffic Count

Period	Queen Victoria Park	South Boulevard	North Boulevard	Stoney Creek – Battlefield Park
April	329,135	56,144	91,576	-
May	447,645	78,354	142,961	7,340
June	511,456	81,763	151,999	9,332
July	763,808	111,362	210,850	7,920
August	751,084	104,520	213,425	7,028
September	450,676	67,341	143,217	7,502
October	337,464	54,770	106,417	3,215
Total 1987	3,591,268	554,254	1,060,454	42,337
Total 1986	3,684,566	555,077	1,016,873	37,409
An Increase/ Decrease of	*– 93,298* (– 2.53%)	*– 823* (– 0.15%)	*+ 43,581* (+ 4.23%)	*+ 4,928* (+ 13.17%)

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

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STATEMENT OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 1987

LAND		
Riverview Estates (8.2 Hectares)	$ 550,305	
Queenston Quarries (39.7 Hectares)	3,090	$ 553,395
ROADWAYS, BRIDGES AND PARKING AREAS		
Queenston Heights Park – Entrance Curbing and Boulevard	$ 45,414	
Recreation Trail – Aero Car to Queenston	342,940	
School of Horticulture Arboretum – Paving Stone	20,518	
Oakes Garden Parking Lot – Paving Stone	13,679	
Curbing Boulevard – Murray Hill to Clifton Gate Store	105,490	
Queen Victoria Park Bus Parking Lot to Falls – Pathways	32,187	
Table Rock to Canadian Niagara Power – Paving Stone	69,638	
Fraser Hill – Greenhouse People Mover Station – Paving Stone	28,972	
Recreation Trail – Marina to Fort Erie	52,931	711,769
OAKES GARDEN THEATRE		
Pagoda Roof Renovation		16,288
STONE PARAPETS, WALLS AND ARCHES		
Reconstruct Lake Wall at Fort Erie		300,091
POWER AND WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS		
Queenston Heights Park – Park Entrance Lighting	$ 13,071	
Aero Car Store – Waterline Replacement	65,525	78,596
PARK BUILDINGS		
Queenston Heights Park – Public Washroom Renovations	$ 117,995	
School of Horticulture – Pergola	74,249	
Victoria Park Restaurant – Upper Banquet Front Section Renovations	22,593	
Greenhouse – Reception Area Maintenance Platform	25,664	
Rebuild Greenhouses	72,683	313,184
REVENUE PRODUCING FACILITIES		
School of Horticulture – Ice Cream Parlour	$ 40,245	
Victoria Park Restaurant – Replace Beer Garden Floor	22,355	
Victoria Park Restaurant Upper Banquet Area – Air Conditioner	5,167	
Victoria Park Complex – Boiler and Steam Changes	50,523	
Table Rock North – Air Conditioner Chiller	40,129	
Table Rock South – Retail Showcase Windows	50,354	
Marina – Shoreline Docks Replacement	66,805	
Old Fort Erie – Reconstruct Bastion Wall	199,599	
Stoney Creek Battlefield House – Verandah Restoration	55,040	530,217
		$2,503,540
QUEEN VICTORIA PARK TRAFFIC AND PEOPLE MOVER SYSTEM		
Curbing and Walkways	$ 163,765	
Traffic Signals	160,159	
Electronic Information Signs	15,915	
Falls People Mover Station Canopy	152,481	492,320
		$2,995,860
EQUIPMENT AND FURNISHINGS		967,018
AUTOMOBILES AND TRUCKS		318,866
		$4,281,744

Planning and Development

On July 28, 1987, the Commission chose the architectural and planning firm of Moriyama & Teshima, Architects and Planners, to conduct a long-range planning study. This plan will guide the orderly development of Commission lands for the next twenty years and provide a planning "blueprint" for consideration into the next one hundred years.

Many meetings and interviews are being held with the public and private sectors to receive outside input. An Advisory Group and a Steering Committee provide direction to the consultants.

Princess Elizabeth Building Replacement

In September 1987, the Commission conducted a limited architectural competition to select an architect for the replacement of the aging Princess Elizabeth Building. From eleven entries, a selection committee concluded that no submitted design solution was acceptable for this sensitive site. It was agreed that the most worthy candidate would be given three months to produce a satisfactory design solution.

Controlled Access Highway Policy – Discussion Draft

This discussion draft of the comprehensive Controlled Access Highway Policy made public on May 20th, 1987, is being reviewed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs with input from the affected Municipalities.

A concentrated effort is being made to involve the Ontario ministries, area municipalities, and interested groups and organizations in future plans for The Niagara Parks Commission.

Niagara River Recreation Trail Progress

This trail is now complete from Victoria Avenue in Niagara Falls to the Village of Queenston. Construction continues along the north trail from Fort Erie to Chippawa. Five new bridges are to be constructed along this section. This trail has been made possible by the cooperation of area municipalities and Parkway residents who agreed to the transfer of various parcels of land and road allowances. The following allowances were provided by the Regional Municipality of Niagara - .111 hectares (0.275 acres); The Town of Fort Erie - .416 hectares (1.03 acres); The City of Niagara Falls - .209 hectares (.517 acres); The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake - .58 hectares (1.435 acres).

Properties

The Commission's property holdings grew by 41.11 hectares (101.60 acres).

The highlight was the acquisition of a 39.68 hectares (98.07 acres) extension to Queenston Heights Park. This escarpment parkland was obtained by the Ontario Heritage Foundation through a partial purchase agreement in which Steetley Industries donated 60% of the property's appraised value. The land was then transferred to The Niagara Parks Commission for custodial purposes. This welcomed addition includes a mile of the Bruce Trail, offering spectacular views from escarpment vantage points, lime kilns and abandoned rock wool caves.

Retail Operations Department

Through aggressive marketing and strong inventory control throughout each of the Niagara Parks' retail outlets, this department took advantage of a healthy tourist season to post a sales increase of 18% and a new profit increase of 19.7%.

Textiles were the growth leader with sales increases of 33.1%, primarily from purchases of Canadian-made T-shirts and sweatshirts. Creative design and quality screening are major factors in the sales of souvenir shirts. The visitors are more selective and demand creativity in this practical souvenir.

The inventory control program, which is the key to a successful retail operation, was updated in 1987. The ability to produce immediate, accurate reports on stock movement allowing merchandisers to zero-in on fast moving products is vital. Along with these reports, the Retail Department forwards to its store managers, monthly sales comparisons, wage cost comparisons, inventory cost comparisons and breakage comparisons. With these reports, managers become merchandisers and motivation is kept at a high level.

Frank LaFleche, Executive Vice President of the Niagara Falls Canada Visitor and Convention Bureau, Gordon Paul, Bureau President, Raymond Moriyama of Moriyama and Teshima, and NPC Chairman Pamela Walker review a part of the proposed NPC plan.

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

Ontario

Attractions Department

Overall Attendance Increases

Attendance at Attractions, Golf Courses, People Movers and Museums exceeded four million. Of significance is the 144,000 additional people who used the Maid of the Mist Incline Railway. The Maid of the Mist began operations earlier than usual thanks to a lack of ice in the lower Niagara River in April. Attendance at the Scenic Tunnels exceeded 800,000, an increase of 30,000 visitors. A much lighter weight raincoat, displaying the Park logo, was distributed to visitors. The garments were well accepted by both staff and visitors.

New People Movers Purchased

Two additional double unit People Movers were ordered from Ontario Bus Industries in Toronto which will greatly assist in maintaining service to the visiting public during the summer months. By next season, we will have eleven tractor and ten trailer units operating, representing a total investment of $4,530,000 in rolling stock.

Cooperation

Part way through the 1987 season, a unique integrated travel arrangement was initiated on a trial basis by the Parks Commission in cooperation with the Niagara Transit Commission. Passengers boarding a Niagara Transit bus on one shuttle route in Niagara Falls were provided a transfer to the Parks People Mover system at no additional charge. The experiment was an immediate success in terms of passenger convenience and in reducing the number of buses within the park.

Package Tours Down

One disappointing development was a decrease by approximately 15% in numbers of guests purchasing the Niagara Parks Package Tour. It appears this is a result of more riders taking advantage of the Park People Movers.

Niagara Parks Marina

At the Commission Marina near Fort Erie, all shoreline docks were replaced. This now completes the three-year phased upgrading of our dock facilities. This is the only marina on the upper Niagara River providing large numbers of docking spaces for boaters. A long waiting list for boating space demonstrates the popularity of this local marina.

Visitors enjoy a winter view from the Table Rock Scenic Tunnels

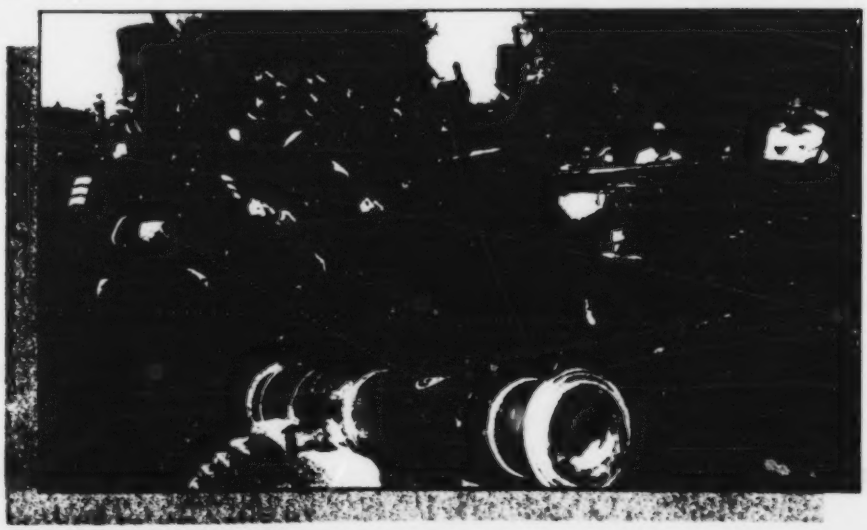
Historic Sites

One objective of the Commission is to provide a broad range of educational opportunities for the visitors to this area. The Commission operates and owns several historic buildings and sites that contribute to this objective.

The historic sites include Old Fort Erie, McFarland House at Niagara-on-the-Lake, MacKenzie House in Queenston, Oak Hall in Niagara Falls and Battlefield House in Stoney Creek. The Commission also administers historic Drummond Hill Cemetery in Niagara Falls and owns the buildings which house the Willoughby Historical Museum and the Mildred Mahoney Dolls Museum on the South Parkway.

Battlefield House Attendance Increases

Although Battlefield House was closed for four months due to major renovations, attendance for the year was up 6%. Apple Day, Wool Day, and Candelight Tours at Christmas were a great success. The volunteer organization, "Friends of Battlefield House", makes a valuable contribution to this museum. Its members assist the staff in fulfilling a mandate to increase public awareness of our historical heritage through education and living history portrayals.



Artillery demonstration at Old Fort Erie.

Old Fort Erie

Close to 43,000 visited the Old Fort Erie this summer, up slightly over last year. The Fort remained open to the public from mid June to Labour Day. During that period there were daily re-enactments on drill and artillery practice followed by guided tours. The Barracks staff took part in several extra-curricular activities during the season, such as the U.S. Ambassadors Dinner, Friendship Festival and Military Tattoo, and the Battle of Lundy's Lane Memorial Service.

Work was completed on the east south bastion, and the guns and carriages were repositioned by early spring. As a result of a vehicle accident at the main gate of the Fort, one of the lion statues was badly damaged. The Commission stone masons did an excellent job in repairing the statue. Educational tours at the Fort were down in September and October, perhaps as a result of the teachers' strike in Toronto, where many of the student school groups originate.

Food Services Department

This department has the largest number of employees - approximately 580 on the regular and seasonal payrolls. This staff operates four fully licenced dining facilities, a cafeteria and five snack bars.

Table Rock Restaurant and The Queenston Heights Restaurant experienced a large increase in patrons. These customers were mainly the result of an increase in group business, especially during the Winter Festival of Lights. Contrary to previous years, Table Rock Restaurant remained open to the general public throughout the year, and a brisk banquet business was maintained at all four restaurants.

Public Relations and Advertising Department

This department is involved in a range of activities which contribute to making the visitors' stay in Niagara a pleasant one. Efforts are also made through a monthly newsletter to keep employees informed of Commission happenings.

Duke and Duchess of York Visit

One of the highlights this year was the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to The Niagara Parks Commission in July. The Royal Couple, escorted by Pamela V. Walker, Chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission, toured both the Table Rock Scenic Tunnels and the Maid of the Mist on a bright, sunny day.

Pamela V. Walker, Chairman, with the Duke and Duchess of York on their July visit to Niagara Falls.

Community Involvement

Employees of The Niagara Parks Commission continue to lead the way in employee donations towards the annual United Way Campaign. Over $7,000 (the largest tourist organization contribution in Niagara) was contributed by Park employees. This amount was matched by the Commission. Yearly payroll deductions towards the local hospital campaign continue.

New Information/Tour Centre Opens

A new Information/Tour Centre was opened at the Rapidsview People Mover Station. Adequate space at this location makes it possible to distribute information on the Parks, the surrounding area and the Province of Ontario. Through this particular outlet, publications prepared by the Niagara Falls Canada Visitor and Convention Bureau are distributed. In 1987, over one third of the Niagara Falls Books (500,000), published by the local tourist association were distributed throughout the Park System.

The Commission continues to be the largest fee paying ($27,588) member of the Visitor and Convention Bureau, as well as a strong supporter of this organization. The Commission's General Manager also serves on the Board of Directors. A flow of information between the Bureau and the Commission results in improving the visitors' stay in Niagara.

Video Introduced

A new four-minute video mini-tour of The Park was completed. Narrated by Pamela V. Walker, Chairman of the Commission, the video has received extensive use by our Group Tours Department and by several television stations in Ontario, and some stations in the Northeastern United States. The video explains clearly the self funding nature of the Commission, while vividly showing the picturesque surroundings of the Park. After enjoying the "video tour", many individuals and groups have expressed interest in visiting Ontario's Niagara Parks.

New Books

Several new books on Niagara were added to our historical and contemporary library collection. Many of these books are dated in the early nineteenth century and provide an excellent source of research material.

New Lighting Displays

The addition of new lighting displays for the increasingly popular "Winter Festival of Lights" drew many favorable comments. Of particular interest was the large animated display paying tribute to the Winter Olympics in Calgary. Due to the increased activity generated by this Festival, the Parks Commission retained many seasonal employees for a longer period than in any previous year.

In point of fact, the Festival, the growing numbers of "off-season" tour groups and more and more year-round attractions are making the total operation less and less seasonal in nature.

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

Ontario

Golf Courses

The Commission operates and maintains two golf courses, the 18 hole Whirlpool Golf Course and the Par 3 Golf Course at Oak Hall.

A new drainage system was completed at the Whirlpool Golf Course and the 14th tee was reconstructed. There was 300 new trees planted at the course. An extremely hot August did create some problem with the fairways, but they rebounded in September.

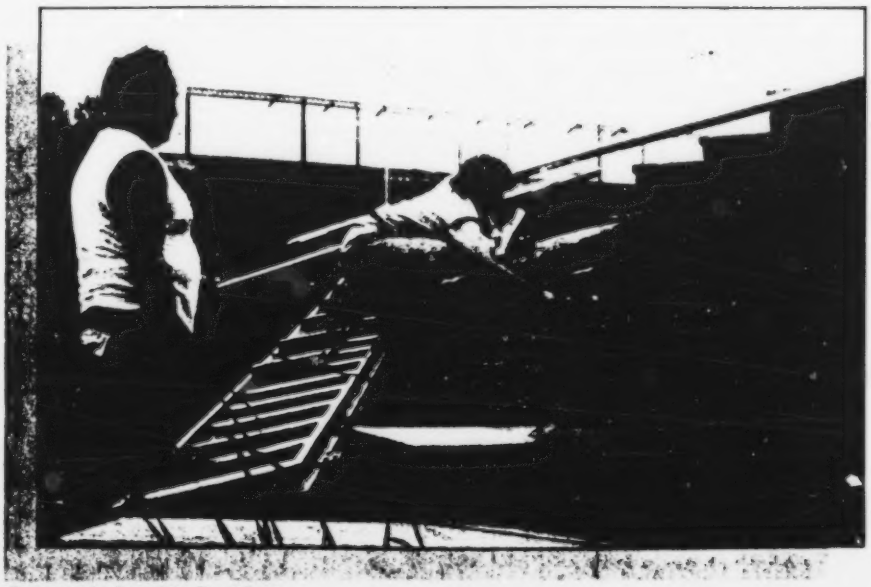
These public courses continued to be popular with both visitors and residents, and early morning tee-off lineups were common. Rented golf carts were fully utilized and the pro shops, restaurant and lounge were well patronized.

Horticulture Department

A trip along the Niagara Parkway from "lake to lake" reveals many improvements have taken place this year.

At the south end in Fort Erie, landscape repairs were completed along the parapet and several hundred feet of hedging material removed along Lakeshore Road.

Niagara River Recreation Trail.



Preparing the face of the Floral Clock.

Proceeding north on the Niagara River Recreation Trail, one can now readily capture the historic and aesthetic charm at a much slower pace. Landscaping for the Trail was finished between the Marina and the former Village of Chippawa. The use of this Trail increased significantly upon the completion of paving.

In the King's Bridge Park and Dufferin Islands area, major dredging and shoreline improvements occurred. In addition, an intensified maintenance/redevelopment program took place at Rapids View Nursery. The People Mover Garage was landscaped and improvements were completed at the corner of Rapids View Drive and the Parkway. There were also improvements at the international Control Structure parking lot entrance.

Improvements at the Greenhouse

Throughout Queen Victoria park, changes continue. At the Greenhouse, several of the houses were reglazed and a new alarm system was installed. In addition to this, an "integrated pest management" control system began.

Landscape paving improvements were completed in front of the Greenhouse and along the River to Table Rock House. For the third consecutive year, there were landscape improvements behind the Victoria Park Restaurant. A retaining wall was constructed and suitably landscaped to direct pedestrians to the front of this building. In the Queen Victoria Park Rose Garden, improvements were made to the arbors and other garden structures. Perhaps the most significant improvement in Oakes Garden Theatre was the landscaping around the parking area adjacent to the Rainbow Bridge approach. In Queen Victoria Park, a tribute to the United Way was created with a "carpet bedding" design. At the Floral Clock an employee's suggestion was implemented to create a new design in the face of the clock.

Nut Collection Begins

From Niagara Falls to Queenston, a post and rail fence was built along the Gorge parallel to the Recreation Trail from Thompson Point to the power plant overlook. In addition, a "nut" collection of over 100 trees was started in the vicinity of Whirlpool Road and Victoria Avenue. This project was done in cooperation with the Ontario Nut Growers Association. A major tree planting program occurred at the Whirlpool Golf Course during October.

New Playground Developed

At Queenston Heights Park, a new playground was installed and entrance landscaping improved. Around Fort Riall, regrading and sodding improved this area aesthetically, and simplified maintenance.

The trip from Queenston to Niagara-on-the-Lake reveals the start of another "nut grove" at Browns Point. A brush and tree clearing program was initiated in 1987 to open up views of the Niagara River for the benefit of vehicular traffic and those enjoying the Recreation Trail.

Trees for the Future

A major tree planting program began throughout the entire Park. The number of new trees transplanted far outweighed the number of trees removed. The Tree Department undertook a major pruning program at Queenston, opening up strategic views of the Niagara River.

A side trip to Stoney Creek indicates an expansion of approximately .81 hectares (two acres) to the natural regeneration area started in 1986. Along the creek, in the wooded area, a nature trail was cleared and a new "nut grove" established. Landscape improvements were made to the foundation planting at Battlefield House. At Charles Daley Park in St. Catharines, shoreline improvements stabilized the beach from further coastal erosion.

School of Horticulture

The 45th Annual Graduation Ceremonies took place in the School auditorium on March 28, 1987. Eight students graduated and received their diplomas from Pamela V. Walker, Chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission. Guest speaker at the exercise was Dr. Jim Tsujita, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario.

The Niagara Parks Commission has been operating this School since 1936. The School is small in enrollment, with 12 students entering yearly for a three-year program. The program is high in practical and academic standards and students who earn a Niagara Parks diploma are in demand throughout the world.

Outdoor Campus

The outdoor campus of the school is open from dawn to dusk and is visited by approximately 700,000 people yearly. There is no admission fee to these grounds. For newlyweds, the picturesque grounds offer exceptional photographic opportunities. On an average Saturday in summer, close to 30 wedding parties visit the area to take photographs.

Pergola at the School of Horticulture in honour of James N. Allan, Honourary Chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission.

New Pergola

A new project completed at the School this year was a pergola dedicated to James N. Allan, Honourary Chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission. The pergola is completed by a stone path from the rose garden fountain. A gift shop, information centre, and new Ice Cream Parlour add to the enjoyment experienced by the visitors to the School.

To increase public use in the arboretum and improve access for the handicapped, an interlocking stone path was installed.

Students participated in field trips and visited nurseries, garden centres, estates, research stations, etc., in Ontario, Washington, D.C., and the Gulf region of the United States. Several changes to the curriculum occurred and improvements were made in the Landscape Design, Arboriculture, Business, and Supervision courses. Students from several horticultural institutions visited the campus including a group from Longwood Gardens, New Jersey.

Class of 1987. Back row left to right: Matthew Robertson, Hamilton, Ontario; Michael Pascoe, Loretto, Ontario; Daniel Smnerek, Smithville, Ontario; Darren Schmahl, St. Catharines, Ontario; Thomas MacDonald, Cottam, Ontario. Front row left to right: Wendy Marshall, Newmarket, Ontario; June Graham, West Hill, Ontario; Senga Lindsay, Niagara Falls, Ontario.

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

Ontario

Human Resources Department

This department received a new name in 1987. Formerly known as the Personnel Department, the title now reflects more adequately the areas of responsibility, namely, staffing, classification, training and development, employment equity and staff relations.

247 Years of Collective Service

Eleven regular employees retired in 1987. Two of these retirees were senior members of the Commission; Donald R. Wilson (General Manager, 1968 to April 30, 1987), and Malcolm S. Cushing (Assistant General Manager, 1951 to July 31, 1987). Eighteen new regular employees joined us to replace these retirees and others who had left our employ.

Administrative Changes

There was a realignment of responsibilities in a number of departments. There were also changes in titles at the executive levels in line with general usage for similar organizations in Canada (see Chart).

Largest Payroll Ever

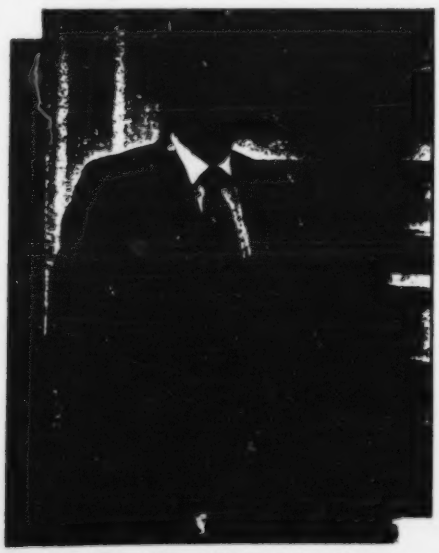
The authorized total number of regular employees was 252 – no appreciable change in over twenty years. The number of seasonal staff peaked at 1,388. The total payroll of $15,627,000 was a record and continued to mark the Commission as the largest seasonal employer in the region. Students, particularly, find necessary and varied employment with the Commission throughout the full period of their studies.

Five student employees were selected to receive $500.00 each under the Student Awards Program which was established in 1985.

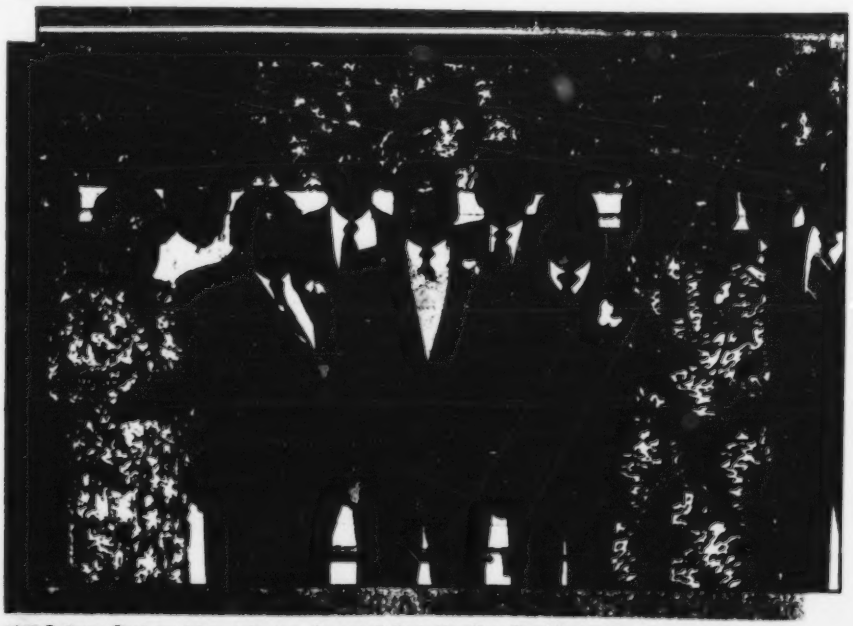
First in Niagara

The Commission agreed to enter into an "Adopt A School Program" with Lord Elgin Secondary School in Niagara Falls. This program is an initiative of The Niagara Peninsula Industry Education Council. The purpose is to establish a mutually beneficial partnership for both The Niagara Parks Commission and Lord Elgin. The main aim is to improve academic instruction and enrich the education program. Students will benefit through a variety of activities such as tours, special instructions and job placement.

N.P.C. Student Award Winners Dennis Schafer, General Manager, presents awards to Shelly Gautier, Kim Briggs, Susan Bean, Susan Ungaro, and Paul Kranjac.

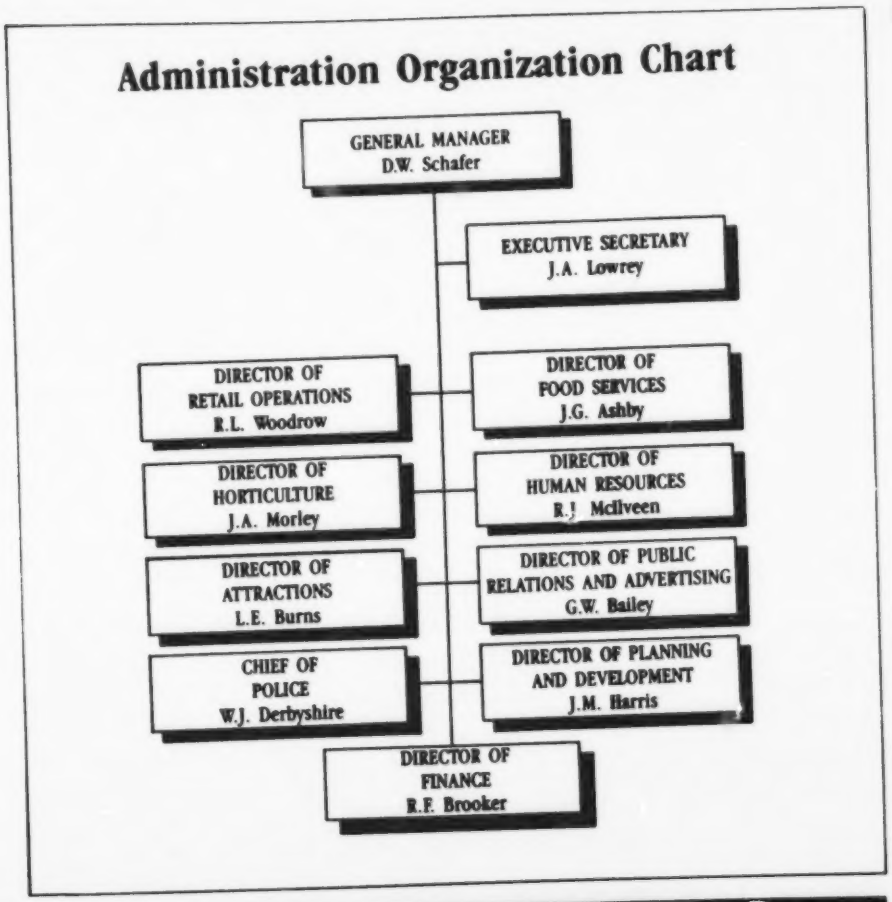


Donald R. Wilson, General Manager of The Niagara Parks Commission from December 1, 1968, to April 30, 1987.



1987 Retirees. Back row left to right: Jean Campbell, Doris Hamilton, Don Wilson, Mac Cushing, Joe Pacenessa, Bob Campbell. Front row left to right: June Mattice, Michael Bauer, Ziggy Kraly, I. Abbatiello, Barbara Dunn, Larry St. Onge.

Administration Organization Chart



Chief Derbyshire is presented with the Ontario Police Medal for Bravery by the Hon. L.M. Alexander, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and the Hon. David Peterson, Premier of Ontario.

Police Department

Police Centennial Logo

1987 marked the 100th Anniversary of the formation of the Niagara Parks Police. Established on May 27, 1887, this force grew from one police officer to a force of 20 people. Included in the regular complement is a Chief of Police, a Sergeant, 4 Corporals, 8 first class constables, 2 probationery constables and 4 dispatchers. In addition, 30 special constables are sworn in to assist during the busy summer months.

The Niagara Parks Police enforce The Highway Traffic Act, The Niagara Parks Act, and The Liquor Licence Act. As a matter of course, they work closely with neighboring enforcement agencies on both sides of the international border.

The police are primarily responsible for traffic movement and crowd control, and are often on the front line for dealing with visitors' questions and problems.

Parks Police Chief Honoured

A highlight this year, was the presentation of the Ontario Medal for Police Bravery to Chief W.J. Derbyshire. Chief Derbyshire was honoured for entering the treacherous Niagara River above the Falls and rescuing a drowning woman. He is the first Police Chief to receive this prestigious award.

Group Tours

A new reservation system employing the use of an "800" number has been most effective in offering better service to the motor coach market.

What The Niagara Parks Commission has to offer was explained by Parks representatives at more than 25 Travel and Trade shows and Market Places. The major shows were the World Travel Mart in London, England; National Tour Association Annual Convention; Pennsylvania and American Bus Association Market Place; as well as a series of shows sponsored by the Senior Travel Planners Association in the United States. Results from attendance at these shows is encouraging. When groups or organizations are attracted to the Falls by our participation at these shows, additional expenditures are made in the private sector for accommodations, food and local, private attractions.

A concentrated marketing effort in Ontario, both by the government and local agencies, highlighted by a Quebec product testing in Niagara Falls proved worthwhile. This also applies to a number of Japanese firms and we anticipate even bigger and better things from the growing travel market of Japan. There has been an increase of "Familiarization Tours" by agents to The Niagara Parks System.

The addition of new lighting displays during the annual Winter Festival of Lights continues to draw more people at this traditionally slow time of the year.

Employment Equity Committee

This Committee is an advisory body to the General Manager on matters pertinent to employment equity. The Committee considers guidelines established by the Ontario Women's Directorate and makes recommendations regarding programs relevant to the Commission.

In 1987, two successful lunch hour seminars were organized - Women and the Law, and Pay Equity. Close to 50 employees, on their own time, attended a Personal Development Workshop. This workshop covered assessment, conquering the fear of interviews, assertiveness training and financial planning.

Outside the workplace, 43 staff development courses were taken by employees. Interestingly, 35% of these training dollars were allocated to women. This is significant since women comprise 30% of the number of regular employees.

A Human Resources survey was conducted to identify training and counselling skills. From this, a list of employees willing to share their expertise was developed.

Committee members spoke at seasonal staff orientations, supervisory training sessions, and regularly published a column in the monthly staff newsletter.

Several transfers and/or promotions occurred, including a breakthrough where a female was hired as a retail stock clerk. Females now represent 30% of the regular workforce, and 51% of the seasonal staff.

Occupational Health and Safety

The Commission continues to strive to provide a safe working environment for its employees and safe conditions for its visitors.

Our accident frequency in 1987 was well below the average for the national rate group, and this resulted in a substantial credit position with the Workers Compensation Board. Only 23 minor lost time accidents occurred in 2,061,493 hours worked.

Finance Department

The Finance Department is responsible for all aspects of the Commission's accounting function. As a Schedule 2 Crown Agency, this not only involves the control and tracking of expenditures, but also the management of revenue.

A record profit was realized in 1987, and as stated elsewhere in this report, the case at year-end accumulated as a result of a decision to delay a number of planned major capital projects, to enable evaluation by the long range plan due in June, 1988.

Two senior employees, with a combined service of 60 years, retired this year; Bob Campbell, Assistant Controller (37 years), and Doris Hamilton, Accounts Payable Supervisor (23 years).

Grants In Lieu of Taxes

$566,000 was remitted as grants in lieu of taxes to the area municipalities of Niagara Falls, Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake. In addition, the Commission continued to provide its own police, garbage pickup, and road construction and maintenance out of revenue, instead of from taxpayer dollars.

Visitors to the Falls facilitates spending on gas, food, souvenirs, accommodations, and attractions in surrounding private businesses. This generates additional revenue to the local, regional and Provincial economies.

Auditor's Report

To The Niagara Parks Commission
and to the Minister of Tourism
and Recreation:

I have examined the balance sheet of The Niagara Parks Commission as at October 31, 1987 and the statements of equity, operations and changes in financial position for the year then ended. My examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests and other procedures as I considered necessary in the circumstances.

In my opinion, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Commission as at October 31, 1987 and the results of its operations and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

D.F. Archer, F.C.A.
Provincial Auditor

Toronto, Ontario
January 15, 1988

Statements
1. Balance Sheet
2. Statement of Equity
3. Statement of Operations
4. Statement of Changes in Financial Position

Schedule
1. Gift Shops, Restaurants and Attractions – Schedule of Operations

BALANCE SHEET AS AT OCTOBER 31, 1987 **STATEMENT 1**

ASSETS

	1987	1986
	$	$ note 3
CURRENT		
Cash	1,033,455	677,342
Temporary investments – at cost which approximates market value	15,552,655	12,793,524
Accounts receivable		
Water rentals	1,520,600	1,461,981
Sundry	582,566	508,416
Inventories		
Saleable merchandise	1,473,547	1,537,084
Maintenance and other supplies	446,340	336,289
Prepaid expenses	150,645	97,756
	20,759,808	17,412,392
FIXED – note 2		
Land	5,488,430	4,935,035
Buildings, roadways and structures	40,752,914	38,310,448
Equipment and furnishings	5,894,954	5,198,833
Vehicles	4,674,622	4,537,570
	56,810,920	52,981,886
Accumulated depreciation	18,166,181	16,472,647
	38,644,739	36,509,239
Capital works in progress	1,477,174	717,957
	40,121,913	37,227,196
	60,881,721	54,639,588

LIABILITIES

CURRENT		
Accounts payable	2,626,315	2,205,016
Accrued payroll	259,381	174,273
	2,885,696	2,379,289

EQUITY

EQUITY (Statement 2)	57,996,025	52,260,299
	60,881,721	54,639,588

See accompanying notes to financial statements.
On behalf of the Commission:

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

STATEMENT OF EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 1987

STATEMENT 2

	1987	1986
	$	$
EQUITY, BEGINNING OF YEAR	52,260,299	47,328,154
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR (Statement 3)	5,735,726	4,932,145
EQUITY, END OF YEAR	57,996,025	52,260,299

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 1987

STATEMENT 3

	1987	1986
	$	$ note 3
INCOME		
Water rentals	3,694,989	3,544,977
Commissions, rentals and fees	941,509	815,214
Net income from gift shops, restaurants and attractions, exclusive of any portion of the administrative overhead of the Commission (Schedule 1)	11,649,210	9,703,319
Sundry income	24,112	23,289
Profit on disposal of fixed assets – net	59,606	13,841
Premium on United States funds – net	335,910	216,153
Interest on bank deposits	962,038	777,987
	17,667,374	15,094,780
EXPENSES		
Maintenance expenses	8,843,742	7,477,275
Administrative and general expenses	2,068,811	1,768,585
Advertising and public relations	180,337	136,466
Bank charges and interest	20,601	28,224
	11,113,491	9,410,550
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR BEFORE DEPRECIATION ON NON-INCOME PRODUCING ASSETS	6,553,883	5,684,230
DEPRECIATION ON NON-INCOME PRODUCING ASSETS	818,157	752,085
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR	5,735,726	4,932,145

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 1987

STATEMENT 4

	1987	1986
	$	$
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash from operations		
Net income for the year	5,735,726	4,932,145
Charges against income not requiring an outlay of funds		
– depreciation	2,124,002	1,978,202
– profit on disposal of fixed assets – net	(59,606)	(13,841)
	7,800,122	6,896,506
Net change in non-cash working capital balances related to operations	274,235	(898,596)
Funds provided by operating activities	8,074,357	5,997,910
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of fixed assets	(5,040,962)	(3,804,085)
Proceeds on sale of fixed assets	81,849	52,047
Funds used by investing activities	(4,959,113)	(3,752,038)
INCREASE IN CASH	3,115,244	2,245,872
CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR	13,470,866	11,224,994
CASH, END OF YEAR	16,586,110	13,470,866
CASH		
Cash	1,033,455	677,342
Temporary investments	15,552,655	12,793,524
	16,586,110	13,470,866

GIFT SHOPS, RESTAURANTS AND ATTRACTIONS
SCHEDULE OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 1987

SCHEDULE 1

	1987	1986
	$	$ note 3
INCOME		
Souvenirs, china and post cards	15,653,100	13,221,337
Food and refreshments	9,673,875	8,228,105
Beer, liquor and wine	1,171,752	1,054,534
Confectionery and tobacco	603,535	558,410
Fares and admissions	7,716,374	6,426,114
Rentals	368,254	331,704
Sundry	675,636	595,218
	35,862,526	30,415,422
COST OF GOODS SOLD		
Souvenirs, china and post cards	7,233,991	6,079,154
Food and refreshments	2,713,366	2,236,015
Beer, liquor and wine	385,930	346,382
Confectionery and tobacco	341,009	317,232
Sundry	198,027	191,416
	10,872,323	9,170,199
GROSS PROFIT	24,990,203	21,245,223
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Advertising	393,543	327,141
Salaries and wages	6,433,420	5,536,546
Employee benefits	834,861	644,978
Fuel, power, water and laundry	511,459	520,637
General expenses	1,315,810	1,019,379
Maintenance of buildings and equipment	1,071,734	978,941
Maintenance of grounds	385,978	319,336
Grants in lieu of municipal taxes	499,150	479,285
Distribution Centre expense	589,193	489,544
	12,035,148	10,315,787
NET INCOME BEFORE DEPRECIATION	12,955,055	10,929,436
DEPRECIATION OF BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT	1,305,845	1,226,117
NET INCOME EXCLUSIVE OF ANY PORTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE OVERHEAD OF THE COMMISSION	11,649,210	9,703,319

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31, 1987

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of Accounting
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

(b) Inventories
Inventories of saleable merchandise are valued at the lower of cost (first-in, first-out) and net realizable value.

(c) Fixed Assets
All fixed assets are recorded at cost. Depreciation has been recorded on the straight-line method, using rates from 2 to 20 per cent for buildings, roadways and structures, from 10 to 50 per cent for equipment and furnishings and from 8 to 50 per cent for vehicles.

2. FIXED ASSETS

	1987		
	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
	$	$	$
Land	5,488,430	–	5,488,430
Buildings, roadways and structures	40,752,914	13,535,568	27,217,346
Equipment and furnishings	5,894,954	3,289,728	2,605,226
Vehicles	4,674,622	1,340,885	3,333,737
	56,810,920	18,166,181	38,644,739

	1986		
	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
	$	$	$
Land	4,935,035	–	4,935,035
Buildings, roadways and structures	38,310,448	12,318,698	25,991,750
Equipment and furnishings	5,198,833	3,082,752	2,116,081
Vehicles	4,537,570	1,071,197	3,466,373
	52,981,886	16,472,647	36,509,239

3. COMPARATIVE FIGURES
The 1986 comparative figures have been restated to conform with the current year's presentation.

4. SURPLUS FUNDS
Pursuant to section 15(2) of the Niagara Parks Act any surplus moneys shall, on the order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, be paid to the Treasurer of Ontario and shall form part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

5. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLANS
The Commission is committed to build a new service centre in 1988. The estimated cost for this project is $4,300,000 which is to be funded from temporary investments outstanding as at October 31, 1987. Many other capital improvements have been deferred pending the completion of a long range master plan.

6. NATURE OF BUSINESS
The Commission is a highly seasonal operation with the peak season being during the months of May to October. During the off-season months of November, 1987 to April, 1988 the Commission will require approximately $8,500,000 to meet ongoing operational needs. This amount will be funded from temporary investments outstanding as at October 31, 1987.

7. REMUNERATION OF APPOINTEES
The total remuneration of the members of the Commission was $34,233 during the year.

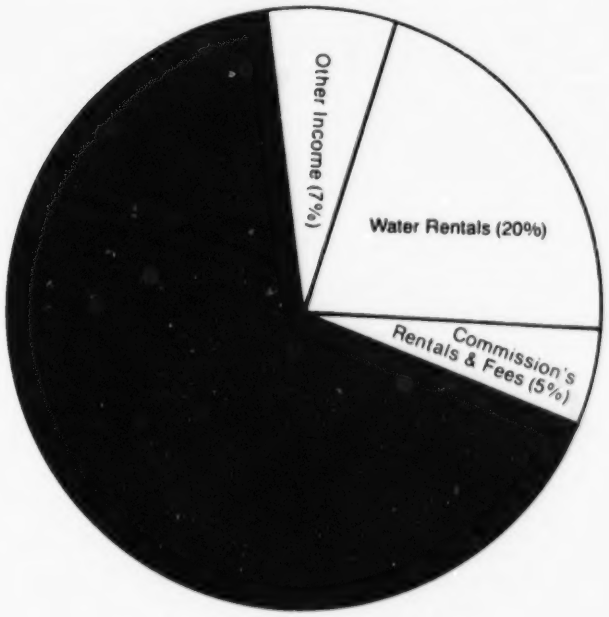
THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

Ontario

THE NIAGARA PARKS COMMISSION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED OCTOBER 31 1987

WHERE THE COMMISSION DOLLAR CAME FROM



WHERE THE COMMISSION DOLLAR WENT